



9110-04-P

**DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY**

**Coast Guard**

**33 CFR Part 117**

**[Docket No. USCG-2018-0988]**

**RIN 1625-AA09**

**Drawbridge Operation Regulations; Old Fort Bayou, MS**

**AGENCY:** Coast Guard, DHS.

**ACTION:** Notice of temporary deviation from regulations; request for comments.

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**SUMMARY:** The Coast Guard is issuing a temporary deviation to the operating schedule that regulates the State Route 609 (SR 609) bascule bridge across the Old Fort Bayou, mile 1.6 at Ocean Springs, Harrison County, Mississippi. This deviation is needed to collect and analyze information on vehicle traffic congestion on SR 609 created when the drawbridge opens to vessel traffic. During this temporary deviation the drawbridge will not open to vessel traffic during specified times.

**DATES:** This deviation is effective from 6 a.m. [Insert date of publication in the FEDERAL REGISTER] through 6 p.m. [Insert date 120 days after publication in the FEDERAL REGISTER].

Comments and related material must be received by the Coast Guard on or before [INSERT DATE 120 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments identified by docket number USCG-2018-

0988 using Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov>.

See the “Public Participation and Request for Comments” portion of the

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section for further instructions on submitting comments.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** If you have questions about this rulemaking, call or e-mail Mr. Doug Blakemore, Eighth Coast Guard District Bridge Administrator; telephone (504) 671-2128, email [Douglas.A.Blakemore@uscg.mil](mailto:Douglas.A.Blakemore@uscg.mil).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**I. Table of Abbreviations**

CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
FR	Federal Register
MDOT	Mississippi Department of Transportation
NPRM	Notice of proposed rulemaking
SR	State Route
§	Section
U.S.C.	United States Code

**I. Background, Purpose, and Legal Basis**

The Mississippi Department of Transportation (MDOT) has requested to change the operating requirements for the SR 609 bascule bridge across the Old Fort Bayou, mile 1.6, at Ocean Springs, Harrison County, Mississippi. This bridge currently operates according to 33 CFR 117.681. MDOT provided the Coast Guard with a vehicle traffic study that concluded that vehicle traffic becomes very congested on SR 609 during morning, noon and afternoon rush hours and that bridge openings for vessels adds to the congestion. This MDOT study and analysis is provided in the docket to this temporary rule.

The 120-day temporary deviation to the regulation will allow MDOT to collect

additional vehicle traffic data to measure the impact of bridge closures on traffic congestion. It will also allow the Coast Guard to collect data on the impact of the regulation change on vessels.

This bridge has a vertical clearance of 26 feet above mean high water in the closed to vessel position and unlimited vertical clearance in the open to vessel traffic position. From January through December 2017 the bridge opened for vessel traffic 267 times. During this temporary deviation the bridge will operate as follows:

The draw of the SR 609 bascule bridge across the Old Fort Bayou, mile 1.6, Ocean Springs, Harrison County, Mississippi shall open on signal; except the draw need not open 6:30 a.m. to 8 a.m., 10:45 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., and 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday except Federal holidays. From 9 p.m. to 5 a.m. the draw shall open on signal if at least eight-hours-notice is given. The bridge will open on signal for emergencies.

The Coast Guard will also inform the users of the waterways through our Local and Broadcast Notices to Mariners of the change in operating schedule for the bridge so that vessel operators can arrange their transits to minimize any impact caused by the temporary deviation.

In accordance with 33 CFR 117.35(e), the drawbridge must return to its regular operating schedule immediately at the end of the effective period of this temporary deviation. This deviation from the operating regulations is authorized under 33 CFR 117.35.

## **II. Public Participation and Request for Comments**

Public participation is essential to effective rulemaking. The Coast Guard will

consider all comments and material received during the comment period. If you submit a comment, please include the docket number for this rulemaking, indicate the specific section of this document to which each comment applies, and provide a reason for each suggestion or recommendation.

We encourage you to submit comments through the Federal eRulemaking Portal at <http://www.regulations.gov>. If your material cannot be submitted using <http://www.regulations.gov>, contact the person in the FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT section of this document for alternate instructions.

We accept anonymous comments. All comments received will be posted without change to <http://www.regulations.gov> and will include any personal information you have provided. For more about privacy and the docket, you may review a Privacy Act notice regarding the Federal Docket Management System in the March 24, 2005, issue of the Federal Register (70 FR 15086).

Documents mentioned in this temporary rule change as being available in this docket and all public comments, will be in our online docket at <http://www.regulations.gov> and can be viewed by following that website's instructions. Additionally, if you go to the online docket and sign up for email alerts, you will be notified when comments are posted or a final rule is published.

Dated: January 29, 2019.

Douglas Allen Blakemore, Sr.  
Bridge Administrator,  
Eighth Coast Guard District.  
[FR Doc. 2019-00871 Filed: 2/1/2019 8:45 am; Publication Date: 2/4/2019]